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ABSTRACT

Information is provided on the Swedish National Board of Universities and Colleges' research on higher education program. An extensive (20-page) list of 1983-1985 publications of the research groups is included, followed by brief descriptions of 23 studies in progress, along with the project leader's name and institutional location. The percentage of grants since 1971 is indicated in four-year clusters for the following areas of research: the role of higher education in society, content and organization, the research function, and the educational function. Information is also provided on: the percentage of research grants by discipline since 1971; the extent of publishing in books, journal articles, and papers/reports by discipline; and publishing frequencies by 10 departments. Analysis of the content of the research programs reveals: the program began with studies of education and its organization, but has recently focused on research and its conditions at universities; while most of the research is conducted by social scientists and humanists, the topics of study are often located in the natural sciences and technology; and the journal article is the commonest form of publication. (SW)

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Swedish Research on Higher Education

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THE RESEARCH ON HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

AN OVERVIEW

The Research on Higher Education program has changed character since it began in 1971. It started as project assignments to individual researchers from the central authority, assignments aimed at elucidating and if possible answering various questions connected above all with central planning and reform processes. In the mid-1970s, however, intensive discussions took place which eventually led to a procedure whereby the advisory groups (one comprising professors of disciplines relevant for the program and one comprising vice chancellors and other higher education practitioners) were made responsible for deciding the focus of these studies. (These steering routines are described in Newsletter 1984:5 of this series, pages 2-3.)

In this way the research program acquired independent status and its advisory groups the role of a small research council. Activities under the program are supported but not controlled by the central authority. And the program now took up the - long-term and independent - task of building up and supporting research competence and a research community for its subject area.

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At the same time the NBUC retained its direct influence on a program of Follow-up and Policy Studies operating parallel to the Research program. This program, a continuation of the reform follow-up program inaugurated in 1974, supports follow up work in higher education and, through studies of different kinds, contributes towards policy development. This segregation and refinement of two programs with different ambitions, values, and decision forms, can be viewed retrospectively as a statement of principle in the debate on research policy, a statement which was also partly based on studies within the research program itself. Otherwise many people, both reseachers and practitioners, both in Sweden and abroad, found it natural during the 1970s to advocate steering by means of integrated, sector based R&D programs, in which basic research was usually made to defer to practice-oriented "R&D research". Today, ten years later, there is generally more understanding for the value of scientific antonomy and more interest in clear distinctions as regards the financing of research. This has strengthened the position of basic research.

The Research on Higher Education program was clearly focussed on basic research after this reappraisal almost ten years ago. The theses of theoretically important research also being practically useful and of the formulation of practical problems to be dealt with in research constituting an important aspect of theoretical research also in the human sciences were accepted as important preconditions for this program. Its ambition now became that of identifying, articulating and testing the theories which can contribute towards a better insight concerning the phenomena of higher education and research. One important lesson which has been learned from the program is in fact that this theoretical development must proceed on multidisciplinary rather than interdisciplinary basis: it is good research in disciplinary terms that is in demand. And as the researchers propose many more relevant studies than can be financed, only the scientifically most interesting proposals are accepted in the program. The long-term aim of such efforts, quite simply, is that of greater self-understanding in the universities and colleges (the program should be "the higher education system's own research concerning the foundations of its own activities"). To this end,

research under the program should encourage a sophisticated discussion and critique of the content, forms and effects of university and other higher education activities. The program therefore works actively with information dissemination, through seminars, problem area meetings and advisory group meetings, as well as through the participation of its researchers in conferences and courses and in the ongoing debate concerning higher education and research policies.

CONTENTS

The outcome of the build-up work which has now been in progress for a number of years cannot be summarised here except in very approximate terms. Table 1 shows the breakdown of funding hitherto between the four major fields of inquiry. As will be seen, the program began with studies of education and its organisation, but has in recent years focussed its attention more on research and its conditions at the universities.

Table 1 Research on Higher Education
Inputs by Areas

Problem areas	Percentage of Grants				Prediction for
	1971-74	75-78	79-82	83-85	1984-89
1. The role of higher education in society	39	33	38	27	30
2. Content and organization	16	38	30	29	30
3. The research function	2	21	19	21	25
4. The educational function	43	18	13	23	15

The forecast indicated in this and the following table is based on assessments by the program's advisory groups. These forecasts were part of the NBUC's reply to a questionannaire in the autumn of 1982, in preparation for the 1984 Government Bill on Science Policy.

Table 2 Research on Higher Education
Inputs by Disciplines

Disciplines	Percentage of Grants				Prediction for
	1971-74	75-78	79-82	83-85	1984-89
Philosophy, history, history of ideas, theory of science	2	18	22	41	30
Economic history, economics, geography	9	16	-	5	-
Education, psychology	70	39	52	27	35
Sociology, social anthropology	18	7	8	14	15
Political science	1	20	18	13	20

Table 2 shows the breakdown of funding between disciplines involved in the studies and relative changes occurring with the passing of time. As will be seen, the researchers are either humanists or social scientists: it is the manner of asking questions and giving answers associated with such disciplines which is expected to augment our insight concerning the conditions under which higher education can best serve its purpose. The topics of study, on the other hand, are often located in the natural sciences and technology, as in the case of current studies of research training in biology and physics, the teaching of mechanics, the establishment and development of interest in technical studies, ways in which medical studies propagate the professional role of physicians, and so on. As can be seen from the table, psychology and education were the major subjects of the program at first, whereas today they share pride of place with subjects such as history, the theory of science and sociology.

Lists of publications and project descriptions are another way of generally describing program content. The most recent publications of the research groups are enumerated in **Appendix 1** (pages 9-30), while **Appendix 2** (pages 31-44) contains brief descriptions of a selection of the studies now in progress. Anybody wishing to find out

more about these projects can get in direct touch with the researchers concerned or read the newsletters obtainable from the program secretariat at the NBUC.

The list of publications in Appendix 1 is limited to the last three years (as well as including a few publications to be printed in 1986). A selection of earlier publications is listed in Neave - Jenkinson (1983) **Research on Higher Education in Sweden. An Analysis and an Evaluation** (pages 90-102). These lists are not limited to what the program has directly funded but rather to what studies the research groups have done about higher education and research: the program grants take the form of support for certain research groups whose activities are also supported through the regular university budget and, sometimes, by grants from other research funds.

The focus and character of publishing have been analysed somewhat in Tables 3-5. Table 3 shows, not unexpectedly, that the disciplines differ somewhat as regards their involvement in the four problem areas of the program.

Table 3 Research groups' publications, 1983-85
By problem areas

Disciplines	No. publications				Total	%
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4		
Philosophy, history, history of ideas, theory of science	10	25	42	12	89	29
Economic history, economics, geography	8	2	1	-	11	3
Education, psychology	20	5	16	43	84	27
Sociology, social anthropology	18	11	8	-	37	12
Political science	15	32	23	-	70	23
Others	16	-	-	2	18	6
Total	87	75	90	57	309	100

Table 4 shows that the journal article is the commonest form of publication. Most of these essays are contained in well-known specialised scientific journals, which is a guarantee of intradisciplinary quality control and of a rewarding interchange within the international research community. Popular scientific magazine and newspaper articles constitute a minor but, possibly, growing proportion.

Table 4 Research groups' publications, 1983-85
Form and language

Disciplines	Books	Journal articles	Papers, reports	Language	
				Swedish	English
Philosophy, history, history of ideas, theory of science	11	60	18	51	38
Economic history, economics, geography	4	5	2	8	3
Education, psychology	5	43	36	37	47
Sociology, social anthropology	6	21	10	11	26
Political science	7	57	6	27	43
Others	3	13	2	7	11
Total	36	199	74	141	163

The papers and reports category comprises "pre-publication drafts", papers for scientific conferences and reports published as occational papers by the various university departments. These latter are also frequently printed after a certain amount of revision. Where language is concerned, it will be seen that international publishing somewhat outweighs publishing in Swedish; the reverse applied when the build-up of the program began. Perhaps it should also be pointed out that publishing - apart from the project descriptions included in the series **Forskning om högskolan** and **Swedish Research on Higher Education** put out by the program secretariat - takes place entirely under the researchers' own auspices. But of course, the program subsidises the researchers' publishing costs, the cost of language checking/translation etc., on the same lines as the research councils.

Table 5 Research on Higher Education 1983-85
Publishing by departments/research groups

Disciplines	Göteborg	Lund	Stockholm	Uppsala	Umeå	Total
Philosophy		11		5		16
History		1		10		11
History of ideas	16		2			18
Theory of science	29					29
Economic history		6				6
Economics		2				2
Education	44		1	11	7	63
Psychology	12	7				19
Sociology	6	22			1	29
Political science			49		16	65
Others						19
International writers						32
Total	107	49	52	26	24	309

Table 5, finally, shows that publishing in recent years has come mainly from a small number of research groups. Ten departments, for example, account for roughly 80% of the listed publications of Swedish researchers. The duration of research support, of course, plays a part here: the six most productive research groups - and this is not apparent from the table - have received between six and fifteen years' support in the program.

Finally perhaps it should be observed that the greatest benefit conferred by the Research on Higher Education program probably is that it gives a number of talented researchers time to work long and thouroghly in this problem field. The good effects of their work can also be augmented through colloboration with the internationally most important research in the field. Current events under the program in these very aims include, for example, the filling of the second of three scheduled six-year research appointments during the spring of 1986. In addition to their own research, these researchers will also actively contribute towards the program's research community (by means of seminars, information interchange etc.).

Another important event is that wor has now begun on planning the program's fourth major internationa conference, which will be held in June 1987 and is expected to dea with the following topics:

1. The Development of University and other Higher Education systems: Historical and Comp irative Perspectives,

2. Basic Units and Creative Env ronments in Higher Education,

3. Higher Education, Professiona lisation and the Role of Intellectuals.

Swedish participation, as with previ ous conferences, is expected to be more or less evenly divided betwe en researchers and practitioners.

Eskil Björklund
November 27, 1985

STUDIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Publications of the program's research groups 1983-85

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Bergendal, Gunnar (1983) "Knowledge in a Free Society", in: **Grundtvig's Ideas in North America, Influences and Parallels** (Köpenhamn: Det Danske Selskab).

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Berner, Boel (1985) "The Vanishing Consensus: Sociology, Work and Technology in Post-War Sweden", in: U. Himmelstrand (ed) **Sociology. The Aftermath of Crisis** (forthcoming).

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Dahlgren, Lars Owe (forthcoming) **Towards a Grammer of Academic Thought** (to be published in 1986).

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2. The Content and Organization of Higher Education

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Selected on-going projects

1. Higher Education in Society

UNIVERSITY STUDIES AND CONCEPT OF REALITY - A STUDY OF EFFECTS OF EDUCATION

Department of Education
University of Gothenburg
Box 1010
S-431 26 MÖLNDAL Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Lars Owe Dahlgren

Project period: 1977-84

Abstract: The project investigates the extent and duration of the socialisation of ideas in higher education. The professional trainings included in the investigation are medicine, technology, psychology and economics. The method used is the longitudinal one, with interviews before, during, and at the end of the study years. The project's ambition is to describe perspectives applied and conceptions held when disentangling problems of a general nature (e.g. learning, studies, professionalism) as well as more specific problems within their own field of study. - To be published in 1986.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Department of Education
University of Umeå
S-901 87 UMEÅ Sweden

Project leader: Professor Sigbrit Franke-Wikberg

Project period: 1977-84

Abstract: The project aims to understand the different sorts of perception entertained by students about their working life, and how this is affected by different educational experiences. The researchers have followed students from four training programs namely medicine, engineering, psychology and economics throughout their university years. By examining the way students think and argue about their educational experiences, their future occupations and problems relating to these sectors, the researchers endeavour to assess the differences between these four types of educational experience. The method used has been repeated in-depth interviewing, over a long period, with a selected sample of students. - To be published in 1986.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF EDUCATION AMONG POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

Department of Education
University of Gothenburg
Box 1010
S-4431 26 MÖLNDAL Sweden

Project leader: Professor Kjell Härnqvist

Project period: 1979-84

Abstract: This project forms part of a wider programme being jointly pursued in the Department of Educational Research at the University of Gothenburg, and it makes use of a growing body of empirical data associated with that programme. Its aim is to study the educational background of selected groups of graduate and undergraduate students and its consequenses for their subsequent careers. The methods of the inquiry are postal questionnaire and survey followed by in-depth interviews with selected respondents. - To be published in 1986.

WORKING LIFE, EDUCATION AND PLANNING

Department of Political Science and
Department of Educational Research
Stockholm Institute of Education
P.O. Box 34103
S-100 26 STOCKHOLM Sweden

Project leader: Dr. Bo Lindensjö

Project period: 1981-85

Abstract: This project examines public policy which links higher education with working life, with attention to the implementation as well as the formulation stages of policy development. Plans made by authorities and planning agencies in this domain will be analysed to see whether they present a uniform policy, whether they are mutually consistant. The study of implementation will be comparative and deal with different types of higher education - traditional studies and new higher education programmes. - To be published in 1986.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND VOCATIONAL IDENTITY

Department of Sociology
University of Lund
Box 114
S-221 00 LUND Sweden

Project leader: Boel Berner

Project period: 1982-86

Abstract: The project investigates the content and transmission of technical knowledge at upper-secondary and university levels, which students assimilate and/or modify according to their own backgrounds and social attitudes.The project will analyse the qualification process with the aid of three concepts: technical competence, technical/ professional values, and technical culture, which relate respectively to cognitive learning, discipline, and world views imparted by technical education. The investigation will be based on observations and interviews at two upper-secondary schools and two institutes of technology, and on the analysis of statistical material, essays, curricula, historical and documentary material.

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND VALUES IN COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

Department of Technology and Social Change
University of Linköping
S-581 83 LINKÖPING Sweden

Project leader: Professor Lars Ingelstam

Project period: 1983-85

Abstracts: Knowledge production processes, at all levels, will be faced with far-reaching demands for understanding and competences posed by computerisation. These demands have long-term implications for higher education.

The purpose of the project is to increase our understanding of the interaction of technology, knowledge, attitudes and values in the programming of computers. It will investigate such characteristics of information technolgies as formalisation, predetermination and restrictions of flexibility, how different types of knowledge about programming are developed and transmitted and how programming work is influenced by knowledge, attitudes and values.

The project involves a number of case studies about the work of programmers and a study of the development of programming as a profession, together with a study of attitudes and values as they relate to working with information technology.

THE LABOUR MARKET AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE. HIGHER EDUCATION AS CLASSIFICATION?

Department of Economic History
University of Lund
Finngatan 16
S-223 62 LUND Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Rolf Ohlsson

Project period: 1984-87

Abstract: The object of the present study is to answer the following three questions in the light of various theories concerning the functions of education and the structure of the labour market. (1) Have the changes in the structure of employment in the post-war era had the effect that employers devote less importance to the cognitive elements of higher education and instead give priority to its classification function? (2) If so, what have been the basic economic changes underlying such a change of attitude? (3) How far has the higher education system been adapted to these possible changes in the national economy and in the attitudes to the functions of education?

This will involve, firstly, charting the transformation of Swedish industry during the post-war era, with particular emphasis on changes in the structure of occupations and professions. A variety of approaches will then be tested (human-capital and filter/sorting approaches respectively) in order to ascertain the extent to which industry has given priority to the cognitive and sorting functions of education respectively.

Secondly, various underlying factors will be investigated which can be presumed to have influenced the occupational structure and higher education with it. In particular, a study will be made of the manner in which the conditions bringing about the rapid economic growth of the 1950s and 1960s were transformed in the 1970s, as regards investment patterns, technical progress and labour market conditions.

In order to answer the third of our main questions, we will take as our starting point the intentions expressed in travaux préparatoires, comments by official bodies and organisations on the proposals put forward by Government Commissions, the reports presented by the Commissions themselves etc., with regard to the reforms of university and other higher education introduced during the post-war era. These original intentions will then be compared with the actual transformation of higher education.

KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION. A HUNDRED YEARS OF COMPETENCE LEGITIMATION

Department of History
Uppsala University
S:t Larsgatan 2
S-752 20 Uppsala Sweden

Project leader: Professor Rolf Torstendahl
Project period: 1984-90

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between actual acquired capacity for solving certain problems and an acknowledged, possibly legalised competence for solving such problems. The initial hypothesis is that no fixed relation exists between knowledge and education in this sense. The intention is for the project to test the theory that the education system bears a definite relation to the economic structure of society, in such a way that knowledge rather than formal competence can come to the fore once the structure of the education system has been adjusted to the change.

The plan is to investigate the relationship between knowledge and education in two main surveys. One of these is intended as a comparative study on a European basis and will involve a comparison of career conditions and degrees for engineering training in Sweden, France and Germany between 1880 and 1980. The engineers to be investigated come from three educational institutions of comparable but still slightly different design, viz. the Royal Institute of Technology (Stockholm), Ecole centrale des arts et manufactures (Paris), and Technische Hochschule/Technische Universität (Berlin). In general terms, all three of these establishments have a high standard of education during the period under review. The main variables, therefore, are the individual level of marks and economic structure, and the intention is to investigate whether the engineers' careers (measured in a few categories) have been decided by the individual level of knowledge (measured in marks) or the general educational level, and whether these conditions changed with the passing of time in step with the transformation of economic structure.

In a second investigation, an intensive study will be made of working processes and educational conditions at a variety of workplaces and within a couple of different occupational groups, so as to be able to study processes of professionalisation and associated monopolisation tendencies regarding formal competence. This investigation is also expected to employ a historical perspective on changes of economic structure.

KNOWLEDGE TRADITIONS IN THE EDUCATION OF PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS

Department of Education and Educational Research
University of Gothenburg
Box 1010
S-431 26 MÖLNDAL Sweden

Project leaders: Professor Ference Marton and Jan-Erik Johansson, M.A.

Project period: 1981-84

Abstract: This project describes and analyses the subject 'pre-school methods' in Swedish pre-school teacher education and how this subject is conceived by its lecturers. Pre-school teacher education is a non-academic vocational training which was incorporated into the Swedish higher education system in the reforms of 1977.

The initiate premise is that considerable variability exists between different conceptions of pre-school methods, and that this variation is related to changes that occured both in the pre-schools themselves, and in the education of pre-school teachers. This study is based on interviews with lecturers in pre-school methods and on the analysis of written documents. The methodological approach adopted draws upon a research tradition that studies peoples conceptions of the world around them (i.e. how they structure their reality), on historical studies of knowledge development, and on sociological studies of the development of learned professions. Written materials will be collected to contrast development in the 1930's and 1950's with those in the 1970's.

The results of a preliminary analysis of 31 interviews are that there seems to be three different ways to understand the subject. The first conception is that the practical experience as a pre-school teacher is the ground of the subject. The second is that pre-school methods is the practical application of child psychology; and the third stresses the importance to teach student teachers how to teach children the subject-matter of the pre-schools. If one then studies the aim of the subject in terms of what one expects the pre-school teacher to achieve with the children, there is a clear correlation with the conception of the subject. It is almost only the lecturers with the third conception of the subject, that of teaching student teachers how to teach children, who give didactical examples in the interviews, i.e. examples of how childrens learning can be facilitated. The question, then, is if it is necessary for a lecturer in pre-school methods to transcend her own personal experience as a pre-school teacher in order to be able to see this didactical dimension. - To be published in 1986.

BUREAUCRATS, EDUCATION, AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIETY

Department of History
Uppsala University
S:t Larsgatan 2
S-752 20 UPPSALA Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Svenbjörn Kilander

Project period: 1982-85

Abstract: The purpose of the project is to analyse the education of Swedish bureaucrats and administrators with respect to the ideological content of that education. Does the view of State and society change over time? The problem is being studied in the context of the development of industrial society between 1890 and 1935, with particular reference to the post-secondary education of engineers, economists, lawyers and social scientists. Source materials will include text books, compendia and the reports of official enquires. - To be published in 1986.

IDEOLOGY AND INSTITUTION. THE CHANGE OF UNIVERSITY IDEOLOGY 1880-1980

Department of History of Ideas
University of Gothenburg
Humanisthuset
S-412 98 GÖTEBORG Sweden

Project leader: Professor Sven-Eric Liedman and Dr. Lennart Olausson

Project period: 1983-86

Abstract: An investigation of the connection between the outward organisation of the university, its relation to public administration, its position in society, and certain central complexes of ideas developing and flourishing within the university. The study focuses on Sweden, but comparisons with other countries are of central importance. Its concern will be with three periods: 1890-1900, the 1930's and, finally the 1960's and 1970's.

LIBERTY, DUTY AND SCIENCE. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS 1945-1970

Department of History of Ideas
University of Stockholm
S-106 91 STOCKHOLM Sweden

Project leader: Professor Nils Runeby

Project period: 1984-87

Abstract: This study focuses on Liberal and Social Democratic student organizations from the 1930's to 1970. The initial assumption is that an important part of the debate conducted within the higher education system occurs in the student associations and that these associations are an important intermediary between universities and "society" (political organisations, "general" cultural debate). The period indicated includes both profound changes in the educational system and a change of climate in public debate. The organizations with which the enquiry is mainly concerned appear to have been relatively close to one another in certain respects and also to have been plunged into such a crisis by developments that they were both dissolved: this makes it particularly interesting to view them in a common perspective. The Social Democratic Party (and government) and its conception of science and of a good university will be discussed in relation to the policy of the Social Democratic Student Organization. The international ideological and political climate constitutes a self-evident frame of reference.

HISTORICAL SCHOOLS IN SCHOLARLY ENVIRONMENTS

Department of History
Uppsala University
S:t Larsgatan 2
S-752 20 UPPSALA Sweden

Project leader: Dr Ragnar Björk

Project period: 1984-87

Abstract: This study is aimed at a systematic comparison of various scientific schools, above all in historical research, bearing different relations to university as a research environment, the aim being to investigate the feasibility of establishing ("introducing"), maintaining, transferring and disseminating ("implementing") a scientific programme within the academic sphere or outside it.

The subject of the study will be a number of historical and social scientific schools. These schools appear with various forms of activity (seminars, associations, editorial boards of journals, institutes) bearing various relations to university as a general organisational framework.

The project will try to establish the strength of these relations and, in due course, draw more general conclusions concerning the prerequisites of success for schools of thought in relation to their academic circumstances and preconditions.

FROM KNOWING HUMAN BEINGS TO A SPECIALIZED SCIENCE. A STUDY OF KNOWLEDGE TRADITIONS IN SWEDISH PSYCHOLOGY

Departments of Theory of Science and History of Ideas
University of Gothenburg
Humanisthuset
S-412 98 GÖTEBORG Sweden

Project leaders: Associate Professors Jan Bärmark and Ingemar Nilsson

Project period: 1985-88

Abstract: This project will investigate how cognitive and social factors worked together when psychology gradually developed into a scientific discipline and a professional speciality. We want to show - with historical reconstructions and theory of science-based studies - how present paradigms have been established, how a "scientification" has been achieved.

This development will be analysed both as a research-based work on psychological theory in the universities and other institutions, and with examples from a number of emerging fields of psychological practice.

3. The Research Function

THE CULTURE AND COMMUNITY OF RESEARCH

Department of Sociology
University of Lund
Box 114
221 00 LUND Sweden

Project leader: Dr. Katrin Fridjonsdottir

Project period: 1982-86

Abstract This project investigates the interplay of cognitive, social and institutional factors in university-based scientific research.

Five disciplines and research specialities are studied as organized units of knowledge production and as employmental organizations. Besides highlighting the socio-cultural characteristics of the units, the project also aims at understanding these features against the cultural and knowledge utilization context.

THE USE OF SECTORAL RESEARCH

Group for the Study of Higher Education
and Research Policy
Department of Political Science
Universitsy of Stockholm
S-106 91 STOCKHOLM Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Rune Premfors

Project period: 1982-85

Abstract: A key feature of Swedish research policy is the so-called sectoral doctrine. Some 60 R&D programs at the central government level aim at providing policy-makers and practitioners with research-based knowledge. The project - using interviews, a written questionnaire, case studies and a seminar series - has investigated in what ways and to what extent these programs have been effective in producing useful knowledge. A book reporting the findings of the project is now being prepared.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

Group for the Study of Higher Education
and Research Policy
Department of Political Science
University of Stockholm
S-106 91 STOCKHOLM Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Rune Premfors

Project period: 1984-1990

Abstract: Dr Rune Premfors has been awarded a grant, a six-year associate professorship, which is tied to the person rather than to a project. This grant gives him the opportunity to further develop his studies within his special areas of interest.

THE ECOLOGY AND MERIT-VALUE OF POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Education
Uppsala university
Box 2109
S-75002 UPPSALA

Project leader: Professor Urban Dahllöf

Project period: 1985-88

Abstract: This project has a double background. (1) The development of the Swedish research organization at the faculty level has earlier been studied in a long-term perspective with regard to the number of permanent posts as professor etc. In comparison with the other Nordic countries and with some other western states of equivalent size and orientation, Sweden has a low number of professorships in relation to the population size. On the other hand, a very high proportion of the chairs belong to the natural and technical sciences including medicine and related fields. Only 23 per cent of the professors belongs to the cultural sciences, i.e. the humanities, social sciences, law and theology. (2) Within these faculties there are indications of great variations in the number of doctors (mainly Ph.D.s) examined, both at a national level between different 10-year periods and at a local level between different universities and departments.

The project aims at explaining differences of the two types mentioned above. Thus the analysis will mainly take place at the middle level, below the national policy and above the micro-level of the different departments.

Some pilot studies have indicated that the national variations in the output of Ph.D.s during the period 1890-1950 to a great extent seem to be dependent on societal factors external to the universities, while differences between faculties and departments seem to co-vary with specific situational "frame-factors" as well as with characteristics of the graduate students and the professors involved.

Among the external conditions is the high merit-value of the Ph.D. in the specific Swedish rule-system, regulating the competence of the head teachers at senior secondary schools and teacher training colleges, who for a very long period were required to hold a Ph.D. An observation which supports this is the very high number of degrees in research fields corresponding to secondary school curricula and the very low number of Ph.D.s from university fields without such a specific "professional market", e.g. the social sciences.

The main purpose of the project, consequently, is to clarify to what extent educational-ecological factors of the type indicated above provide an explanation of the variations in the numbers of degrees. In the first place the study will concentrate on the humanities and the social sciences. Some comparisons will also be made, primarily with Denmark, Finland and Norway, who partly have followed a different system of rules for head-teacher competence.

KNOWLEDGE AND VISION. CONTEMPORARY IDEAS ON THE HUMANITIES IN RESEARCH AND POLITICS

Department of Theory of Science
University of Gothenburg
Humanisthuset
S-412 98 GÖTEBORG Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Aant Elzinga

Project period: 1985-89

Abstract: This project will investigate the position of research in the humanities in Sweden. The project's major questions have their background in: a) the rapid pace of change in the natural and technical sciences and their widespread impact on society; b) recent reorientations in national science policy that focus more sharply on fundamental research and link it to areas of strategic significance; and c) internal discussions within the humanities themselves. In light of the foregoing, and taking its point of departure in a preliminary model of the relationships between science and society, the project will articulate various different actors' concepts of the humanities and their role in society. The empirical frame of reference includes existing knowledge traditions and institutions in the areas of music and literature (or in Swedish - musikvetenskap and litteraturvetenskap), vocational lines of higher education in these fields, and relevant granting agencies and policy advisory bodies like the National Board of Universities and Colleges, the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Council and The National Cultural Advisory Commission (Kulturrådet). In addition to this the cultural concepts of a number of individual researchers will be articulated.

The empirical part of the project is based upon interviews, literature studies and documentation of established policy, as well as colloquys of an interdisciplinary type, involving students, researchers and practitioners.

The theoretical part of the project is designed to capture general as well specific problems and themes in and about the humanities. Apart from seeking to elucidate the situation and various conditioning factors pertaining to research and higher education, our ambition is also to contribute to a policy for humanistic sciences. A rationale for this lies in the rapid and widespread expansion of the natural and technical sciences, which in our day has triggered a response whereby scholars, critics and creative artists in the humanities are challenged to give their interpretations of the contemporary "human condition" of our high-tech societies.

The theoretical analysis will be developed to underpin policy considerations; in this account will be taken of thematic discussions in the international field of "research on research" and the theory of science genre associated with the humanities or humanistic traditions of learning. We also seek to contribute to these discussions.

4. The Educational Function

INTELLECTUAL MATURITY AS AN EDUCATIONAL IDEAL

Department of Philosophy
University of Lund
Kungshuset, Lundagård
S-223 50 LUND Sweden

Project leader: Professor Sören Halldén

Project period: 1981-86

Abstracts: The project concerns itself with concepts of maturity and the relationship of these to the student's self-directedness, determined by his attitude to life, feeling for quality and essentiality, and with his opinions concerning techniques of knowledge acquisition. The investigation is typological and analytic. The main emphasis will be on the analysis of written material.

SUBJECT DIDACTIC STUDIES OF RESEARCH TRAINING IN BIOLOGY AND PHYSICS

Department of Education and Educational Research
University of Gothenburg
P.O. Box 1010
S-431 26 MÖLNDAL Sweden

Project leader: Associate Professor Leif Lybeck

Project period: 1983-86

Abstract: The project studies the phenomenon of research training in a content-related pedagogical perspective. Its purposes are:

To chart the conceptions of research training, entertained by supervisors and post-graduate students, by means of interview studies, and to relate these to their conceptions of subject range, knowledge, science and research.

By means of participating studies chart aspects of research training and the interaction between supervisors, student and the cognitive structure of the discipline, with reference to problems arising in the student's thesis.

To study the outward conditions applying to research training in the two fields.

To compare the results in order to gain more fundamental insights for a discussion in a theoretical context.

EDUCATION FOR THE APPLICATION OF STATISTICS. A STUDY OF KNOWLEDGE PERSPECTIVES

Department of Philosophy
Uppsala University
Villavägen 5
S-752 36 UPPSALA Sweden

Project leader: Dr. Bengt Molander

Project period: 1983-87

Abstract: The purpose of this project is to examine in a historicial and comparative perspective the capacity acquired by students for applying statistics critically and with reflection (both within pure statistics and in its broader application). It will also examine the conceptions of cognition of students, teachers and practicing statisticians of various kinds together with their views concerning the role of statistics. The study will employ content analysis of programme and goal documents, analysis of teaching materials (in various subjects and traditions) and interviews.

INTEREST IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Department of Psychology
University of Gothenburg
Box 14158
S-400 20 GÖTEBORG Sweden

Project leader: Professor Lennart Sjöberg

Project period: 1984-88

Abstract: This project is a continuation of our research into study interest. Our intention is to follow three groups of students, viz. technologists studying civil engineering and chemistry at the Chalmers Institute of Technology, and psychology students. An initial collection of data was undertaken by means of a comprehensive questionnaire at the beginning of the autumn 1983, when these students had just commenced their studies. We are particularly concerned with investigating the development of study interest, its relation to various educational experiences and the student situation generally, and its influence, for example, on interrupting studies or on going into postgraduate studies. We will also make special studies of postgraduate students with both theoretical and more applied specialities, and we will undertake certain further studies of upper secondary school students. This latter group continues to attract our interest, mainly because we wish to ascertain whether a certain onesidedness previously observed in the interest make-up of natural scientists and technologists is also present in other groups. We also wish to study the role of tactics in the choice of studies and the apportionment of students' efforts between different subjects.

GS Snabbtryck, Stockholm 1986